

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An endoscope comprising:

an insertion unit having a soft portion;

a small-diameter portion which is included in the soft section and whose outer diameter is substantially the same over the whole length thereof;

a large-diameter portion which is formed on the operator side of the soft section opposite to the small-diameter portion and whose outer diameter is larger than the outer diameter of the small-diameter portion; and

a tapered portion linking the small-diameter portion and the large-diameter portion, wherein:

at least part of the tapered portion is disposed forward an endoscope portion separated 70 cm from the distal endoscope end.

2. An endoscope according to Claim 1, wherein the small-diameter portion is long enough to be bent 180° while forming an arc having a minimum radius.

3. An endoscope according to Claim 1, wherein at least part of the tapered portion is located forward an endoscope portion separated 45 cm from the distal endoscope end.

4. An endoscope according to Claim 2, wherein at least part of the tapered portion is located forward an endoscope portion separated 45 cm from the distal endoscope end.

5. An endoscope according to Claim 1, wherein indices indicating distances from the distal endoscope end are inscribed on the soft section.

6. An endoscope according to Claim 2, wherein indices indicating distances from the distal endoscope end are inscribed on the soft section.

7. An endoscope according to Claim 3, wherein indices indicating distances from the distal endoscope end are inscribed on the soft section.

8. An endoscope according to Claim 4, wherein indices indicating distances from the distal endoscope end are inscribed on the soft section.

9. An endoscope according to Claim 5, wherein the plurality of indices is inscribed equidistantly.

10. An endoscope according to Claim 6, wherein the plurality of indices is inscribed equidistantly.

11. An endoscope according to Claim 7, wherein the plurality of indices is inscribed equidistantly.

12. An endoscope according to Claim 8, wherein the plurality of indices is inscribed equidistantly.

13. An endoscope according to Claim 9, wherein the tapered portion extends between two of the indices.

14. An endoscope according to Claim 10, wherein the tapered portion extends between two of the indices.

15. An endoscope according to Claim 11, wherein the tapered portion extends between two of the indices.

16. An endoscope according to Claim 12, wherein the tapered portion extends between two of the indices.